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UCCI 1st Nursing Cohort Achieves 100% Pass at Regional Registration Exam

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For the first time in history, the Cayman Islands now has homegrown, full-fledged nurses. Four years of hard work and dedication have paid off for the UCCI School of Nursing as they achieved a historic milestone few, if any, can claim: 100% passing rate for their inaugural cohort at the Regional Examination for Nurses' Registration (RENr).

The RENr is the ultimate point in the journey of nursing students across the Caribbean region. Without passing it, no student can obtain the title "Registered Nurse" (RN) nor practice as one.

In a letter dated November 15, the Registrar of the Nursing Council of Jamaica (NCJ), Mrs. Merle Rochester-Riley congratulated UCCI President J.A. Roy Bodden saying, "Ten students sat the RENr, and all ten were successful."

"This resounding success speaks well to the potential of the University College as the foremost tertiary level institution in these Islands," said President Bodden, who is proud to have been an integral part of the programme from the outset.

He added, "I wish to congratulate the successful cohort and to express my sincerest appreciation to the Director of the School of Nursing, Ms. Terica Larmond and her faculty members and staff."

The letter accompanied the results for each of the "Resilient Ten" as they are fondly referred to by School of Nursing Director, Terica Larmond.

"I am elated and so proud of my ten 'babies.' Based on the results which we received, less than 50% of the total number of examinees passed. So to achieve 100% passing rate is a testament to work well done by the ladies who have set the bar extremely high," said Mrs. Larmond.

Mrs. Larmond continued to say that these results also speak to the quality of the UCCI Nursing programme, "This proves that we are on par with the best in the region and can expect students from other jurisdictions to consider UCCI as a top choice to study nursing."

This achievement, she says, also impacts the community. "Having homegrown nurses speaks volumes of the quality of care that is offered," she added. "Patients will have more nurses who are sensitive

to their culture, who have a deep understanding of their needs and their beliefs.”

As for the Resilient Ten, Mrs. Larmond is confident that they will all find gainful employment as RNs. “Seven of them are currently employed by the Health Services Authority as Registered Nursing Assistants (RNAs) or in non-nursing roles. We have also received offers from other healthcare facilities on Island. In addition, now that they have passed the RENR, they have the foundation to seek employment within the region and all over the world so long as they meet those countries’ standards.”

The RENR was held on October 5th at UCCI, which was granted exam centre status. As per protocol, the examination was invigilated by examiners from the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC).

This first cohort of homegrown nurses embarked on a journey that Mrs. Larmond characterizes as historic and well-travelled. They were the first to undergo the Capping Ceremony which marks the achievement of transitioning into clinical experience. Mrs. Larmond said, “It is important to note that a number of the students were working full-time and attending school full-time as well. It was a real challenge, but we worked around things to meet their needs.”

Earlier this year they underwent clinical examinations in which they all did well. Last July, they spent two weeks gaining a wealth of experience at the Bustamante Hospital for Children in Jamaica to complete NCJ requirements to sit their RENR.

They received their nursing pins at the inaugural Pinning Ceremony which brought so many members of the nursing and medical community together. They also joined the rest of UCCI’s Class of 2017 for a historic Commencement Ceremony earlier this month.

The Nursing programme was one of the most significant components of President Bodden’s vision when he took office. “It was one of the planks in which I told the interviewing panel that I would establish the success of my presidency. I would like to publicly commend the Board of Governors led by Chairman Berna Cummins at the time, for demonstrating confidence in my vision and for supporting this and other programmes as well,” he said.

A joint initiative between UCCI, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Health Services Authority, the Nursing programme, said President Bodden, is proof of the effectiveness and success of such partnerships and hopes that as he demits office, this template is used for future programmes.

Since opening its doors in 2013, the UCCI School of Nursing has admitted five cohorts. With this most recent success, the team of three faculty and one administrative staff led by Director Larmond have pledged to maintain the bar set by the Resilient Ten and look forward to growing its facilities and enrolment in the years to come.

“We invite aspiring nurses in Cayman and the region to reach out to us. We have a programme that has been tried, tested and proven successful. Come on board and be a part of a rewarding journey,” said Mrs. Larmond.